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Multi-State, Public-Private Information Sharing Initiative Selected for Harvard ‘Bright Ideas’ Recognition

IEMA, Central U.S. Earthquake Consortium Working to Streamline Public-Private Communications During Disasters

SPRINGFIELD – An initiative to streamline information sharing between the public and private sectors during a multi-state disaster has earned national recognition from the Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation at the John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University.

The private sector integration project, initiated by the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) in conjunction with the Central United States Earthquake Consortium (CUSEC), was one of 111 innovative government initiatives named ‘Bright Ideas’ today by the Ash Center.

The ‘Bright Ideas’ initiative is part of the Innovations in American Government Awards program. ‘Bright Ideas’ are showcased on the Ash Center’s Government Innovators Network, an online platform for practitioners and policy makers to share innovative public policy solutions.

“We are honored that the private sector integration project was recognized alongside so many worthy initiatives,” said IEMA Director Jonathon Monken. “We’ve made significant strides in Illinois toward building partnerships with the private sector. This initiative will expand that concept to the regional level and enable more effective response to a multi-state disaster, such as a New Madrid earthquake.”

Monken said IEMA and CUSEC are developing the private sector integration project to enable the private and public sectors throughout the Central United States to communicate and collaborate before, during and after an event within the New Madrid seismic zone. The initiative will allow a private company with locations in multiple states to reach out to the public sector in a consistent manner, streamlining communications during a disaster.

Last fall, IEMA created a Business Emergency Operations Center (BEOC) at the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) in Springfield to integrate the private sector into the state’s emergency response and resource deployment. IEMA is also participating in CUSEC’s CAPSTONE 14 initiative, a three-year plan to enhance response capabilities throughout the eight-state region. CAPSTONE 14 activities will culminate with a functional exercise in June 2014. CUSEC member states include Alabama, Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Mississippi, Missouri and Tennessee.